

The Keep Smiling Vermont Basic Screening Survey is conducted through the Vermont Department of Health's Office of Oral Health to assess the oral health status of children in Vermont. A representative sample of over 1,700 kindergarten and third grade children were screened in 2022-2023. The results showed:

### Over **40%** of children experience tooth decay.



This rate is significantly higher than it was in the 2016-2017 survey. Of those surveyed, **36%** of kindergarten children and **48%** of third grade children had tooth decay in their baby and/or adult teeth.

### About **1 in 4** children need dental care.



- **18%** need early dental care for untreated decay or broken fillings.
- **6%** need urgent dental care due to pain or infection.
- There are more dental care needs now compared to recent years.

### **Socioeconomic status** has a significant impact on a child's oral health.



Schools with more children eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are more likely to have children with tooth decay. Socioeconomic status disparities were found for decay experience, presence of untreated decay, dental care needs, and mean numbers of teeth with decay experience.

### **Good oral health is vital to overall health**, yet too many children have poor oral health.

The Office of Oral Health is working to improve oral health for all Vermonters. Programs like the [802 Smiles Network](#) of school dental health programs are helping kids access dental care. Plus, there are a variety of resources available on the [Oral Health website](#). You can find the full 2022-2023 Keep Smiling Vermont survey report and previous reports on the [Oral Health Data website](#).

**For more information:** Office of Oral Health, [VTOralHealth@vermont.gov](mailto:VTOralHealth@vermont.gov)

#### KEY POINTS

- **Good oral health is vital to overall health.**
- **Although tooth decay is a preventable disease, it continues to affect too many Vermont children.**
- **Visit [HealthVermont.gov](https://www.healthvermont.gov) to learn more about how the Office of Oral Health promotes good oral health and how to keep smiles bright at any age.**